



News Release

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Arthritis Pain Keeps Utahns with Heart Disease Inactive

(Salt Lake City) – A new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study shows that 55 percent of Utah adults with heart disease also have arthritis, a painful condition that may be a barrier to physical activity—an essential strategy for people trying to manage and control their heart disease.

Research shows that engaging in joint-friendly activities such as walking, swimming, biking, and participating in arthritis-specific exercise programs can help manage both conditions. For people with heart disease, physical activity helps to lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels. For people with arthritis, physical activity reduces pain, improves function, and delays disability.

“People with arthritis often avoid physical activity because of fear of pain, fear of further damage to the joints, and because they don’t know that many activities are very safe. These concerns often lead to inactivity and therefore lack of management of their arthritis and other conditions they may have such as heart disease,” said Nicole Bissonette, Arthritis Program Manager for the Utah Department of Health.

The national prevalence of physical inactivity (29%) among adults with both arthritis and heart disease was considerably higher than among adults who have heart disease alone (21%), adults who have arthritis alone (18%), and adults in the general population (11%). The study found that nearly 25 % of adults in Utah with heart disease and arthritis are physically inactive.

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The UDOH partners with many groups to offer education and physical activity programs. To find a program in your area or to learn more about local efforts to address arthritis, visit www.health.utah.gov/arthritis or call 801-538-9458.

For more information on the UDOH Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, visit www.hearhighway.org.

To access the CDC heart disease and arthritis study, visit http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5807a2.htm?s_cid=mm5807a2_e.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care and promoting healthy lifestyles.